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Medical Officer's Annual Report for 1938.

TO THE BRECON ~~URBAN DISTRICT~~ COUNCIL.

Gentlemen,

I have the honour to report to you on the Health of the Borough of Brecon in the year 1938.

This is my last report as I am about to be succeeded by a Full-Time Medical Officer.

I take the opportunity of expressing my thanks to you and other members of the Council not now serving for your courteous help and encouragement at all times.

I believe that the change to a Full- Time Office will be of great value to the town, as there is much to be done, particularly to improve the sanitation of the town and to provide adequate facilities for isolation of infectious disease. This in the event of war- which I trust may never come - would present a menacing problem.

The Urban District consists of the Parishes of St. John's and St. Mary's on the North side of the River Usk, these Parishes being divided by the stream and deep gorge of the Honddu; and of the Parish of St. David's known as St. David's Within, but in common speech Llanfaes which lies to the South of the Usk, Eastward from the confluence of the Tarell Stream with that river. The two parts of the town North and South of the Usk are united by a massive stone bridge of seven arches, and by the ancient ford some hundred yards below the bridge.

The Town is a County Town of a shire of its own name, containing the County Offices and branch offices of various Government Department. It is the Assize town for the County and receives the visit of the Judge on circuit thrice yearly. The town is also the see of a Bishop and contains a noted Congregational College, and Ancient Public School, and the Depot of an Infantry Regiment, the South Wales Borderers.

The following facts are worthy of special note.- Viz.,

The Estimated population is 5,136 and the number of inhabited houses has increased by 20.

The number of unemployed in the town is still large and there is no apparent prospect of any new industry.

During the year the Birth Rate has decreased slightly from 11·11 to 10·70 per 1,000 of the estimated population, and there was also a decrease in the Death Rate.

Public Health Officers.-

Medical Officer.- Thomas Lewis Davies, M.A., B.M., B.Ch., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. - Part Time.

Borough Surveyor, Waterworks Engineer, and Sanitary Inspector.-

H. L. Griffiths,- The Testamur (by examination) of the Institution of Municipal & County Engineers, and the Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute.- Whole Time.

Assistant Borough Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector.-

Stanley Jinks.- Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute.- Whole Time.

SECTION. A.

Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.-

Area in acres.	.....	2,868.
Population (estimated) 1938.	.....	5,136.
Number of inhabited houses.	.....	1,495.
Rateable value.	.....	£ 29,059.
Sum represented by a penny rate.	.....	£ 113.5.0.

Chief Industries.- Agricultural Centre, Railway and Motor Bus Centres Offices.

Extracts from Vital Statistics for the year.-

		Total.	Male.	Female.	
Live Births.	(Legitimate.	52.	32.	20.	)Birth Rate per
	(Illegitimate	3.	2.	1.	)1,000 of the
					)estimated popula-
					)tion = 10·70

The Rate for England and Wales was 15·1

Still Births.	(Legitimate	4.	1.	3.	)Rate per 1,000
	(Illegitimate	-	-	-	)Total (live and
					)still) Births =
					67·79

The Rate for England and Wales was 0·60 (This rate for England and Wales is per 1,000 population).

Deaths.		59.	31.	28.	)Death Rate per
					)1,000 of the
					)estimated resident
					)population = 11·09

The Rate for England and Wales was 11·6

Deaths from puerperal causes (Headings 29 and 30 of the Registrar-General's Short List.).-

		Deaths.	Rate per 1,000 (live and still) Births.
No. 29.	Puerperal Sepsis ...	Nil.	Nil.
No. 30.	Other puerperal Causes.	Nil.	Nil.
	Total.	Nil.	Nil.

The Rates for England and Wales were 0·86, 2·11 and 2·97 respectively.

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age.-

All infants per 1,000 live bieths - - - -	72·72
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live bieths.	76·92
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live bieths.	Nil.

The Rate for England and Wales was 58·00

Deaths from.-

Cancer (all ages).	13.
Measles (all ages)	Nil.
Whooping Cough (all ages)	Nil.
Diarrhoea (Under 2 years of age).	1.

Transferable Deaths.-

3 persons belonging to the district died outside the district and 7 persons belonging to outside districts died within the district in the year.

SECTION. B.

General Provision of Health Service for the Area.-

(a) Laboratory facilities.- Carried out at the Beck Laboratory, Swansea.

(b) Ambulance facilities.- The Order of St. John's of Jerusalem has an ambulance available at all time for all except infectious cases. This service is quite adequate to meet the demands of the district.

(c) Nursing in the Home.- The Brecon Nursing Association provides a District Nurse for the Parishes of St. John's and St. Mary's who, however, does not attend midwifery cases, and another District Nurse, who is also a Midwife, serves the Parish of St. David's and the outside Parishes within the Rural District of Brecon.

(d) Treatment Centres and Clinics, including Clinics solely for diagnosis or consultation.- A Maternity and Child Welfare Centre is provided by the County Council and meets monthly on the third Friday. The treatment of Tuberculosis is undertaken by the Welsh National Memorial Association at the dispensary in Brecon, and Venereal cases at the General and Eye Hospital, Swansea, under the County Council.

(e) Hospitals.- The County War Memorial Hospital, situated within the Borough of Brecon, deals with Medical and Surgical Cases and has accommodation for 36 beds. Cases are also attended to at the Public Assistance Institution Infirmary. An Isolation Hospital for Infectious Diseases comprising three wards and Administrative Buildings, situated half a mile to the West of the Town has been made use of during the year for cases from the Borough. This is a temporary structure and is somewhat inadequate. The Council has negotiated with other Sanitary Authorities in the County with the object of erecting a modern hospital to serve a wide area within the County.

(f) Local Government Act, 1929. Administered by the County Council.

(g) Poor Law Medical Out Relief.- Administered by Public Assistance Department of the County Council.

(h) Institutional Provision for the care of Mental Defectives.- Provided by County Council. Female Patients being cared for at Pantglas Hall, Carmarthenshire, and Males at Forden Institution, Montgomeryshire, and elsewhere.

(i) Midwifery and Maternity Services.- There are three private midwives practicing within the Borough and cases are also taken by a District Nurse Midwife. At the end of the year the area was officially covered under the Midwives Act, 1936, which is administered by the County Council. The Ante Natal examinations are being carried out in conjunction with the County Council, for which examinations no charge is made to the patient.

(j) Institutional Provision for Mothers or children.- No provision is made for such cases.

(k) Health Visiting.- This work is carried out by the Health Visitors employed by the County Council.

(l) Children Act. 1908 - Administered by the County Council.

(m) Orthopaedic Treatment.- The County Council has a scheme and the services of a Whole Time Orthopaedic Sister and a Part Time Orthopaedic Surgeon who visits the County Centres four times yearly.

(n) Maternity and Nursing Homes.- There are no Registered Homes in the area; the registration of such Homes comes within the supervision of the County Council.

Section. C.

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.-

(a) Water.- Source of Supply - Brecon Beacons. Constant Supply - excellent quality - 5° hardness Gravitation Scheme. The Chemical and Bacteriological analysis made 1st. April 1938 was very satisfactory. Every precaution has been taken in conformity with directions contained in Circular 1684, of the Ministry of Health dated March 1938, to safeguard the purity of the supply.

(b) Drainage and Sewerage.- The Sewerage Scheme is water borne, entirely gravitation - all houses (excepting eleven cottages and isolated farm houses) are connected thereto.

(c) Rivers and Streams.- Brecon is situated by the River Usk at the confluence of its tributaries the Honddu and Tarell. There is some slight pollution, but no action has been taken as regards this.

(d) Closet Accommodation.- Water Closets everywhere, except in a few isolated farms and cottages in the outlying district which have earth closets. It is desirable that every house should have a separate W. C.

(e) Public Cleansing.- Method of collecting dry house refuse and disposal of same. By motor lorry. Disposed of by incineration at the Town Refuse Destructor. The Provision of the Sanitary Dustbin by owners of every premises in the Borough has been required under Section 75, Public Health Act, 1936.
Section 73, Public Health Act, 1936. - The Council undertake to remove and dispose of all trade refuse at an Annuak charge of 10/- per ton, with a minimum charge of £1 per annum..

(f) Report of Sanitary Inspector (Under Article 27 of Sanitary Officers' (Outside London) Regulations, 1935.-

Number and Nature of inspections made - Several hundreds.

Number of Notices Served.-

(a)	Statutory - Nuisance abatement	-	39.
	Factory and Workshops	-	11.
	Bakehouses	-	21.
(b)	Informal.		73.

(c) Result of the service of such notices.-

Compliance in every case except one where Statutory notices were served and all of the informal notices.

Special Classes of Premises and occupations subject to Control by the Authority.-

Common Lodging House - Regularly inspected - in excellent condition. Accommodation is considerably in excess of the demand.

Number of Houses let in lodgings - 4 - Regularly inspected.

Tents - Not any.

Vans. - Living vans in connection with the Statutory Fairs twice a year for a week - regularly inspected - water and sanitary accommodation provided.

Sheds and others - Not any.

Offensive Trades, Underground Sleeping Accommodation, Etc.,

There are two premises where offensive trades are carried on.

(1) Fellmonger, and
(2) Knackers.

Action taken re above.- Regularly inspected and kept in satisfactory condition.

Other Sanitary Conditions.- Disposal of the Dead is carried out by burial in Cemetery and Churchyards.

Rag Flock Acts. 1911 and 1918.- Not any premises carrying on this trade in the Borough.

Factories and Workshops (including Bakehouses).-

There are 47 workshops and workplaces (including Bakehouses) on the registers and 75 visits of inspection were made during the year. Matters referred to the Council by the Home Office Inspector were attended to. Lime washing of workplaces and bakehouses regularly enforced.

Fried Fish Shops.- Visited periodically.

(g) Shops and Offices. Action taken under the provision of the Shops Act, 1934, and Public Health Act 1936.-

Five notices have been served to provide sufficient and suitable sanitary conveniences and 1 certificate of exemption.

(h) Camping Sites.-

(1) The number of sites in the area which were used for camping purposes during 1938.- 3.

(2) The number of camping sites in respect of which licences have been issued by the Authority under Section 269 of the Public Health Act, 1936.- 3.

(3) The estimated maximum number of campers resident in the area at one time during the Summer season, 1938.- --

These sites are provided with suitable sanitary accommodation and water supply, and mainly occupied by vans entering the town for the May and November Statutory Pleasure Fairs.

(i) Smoke Abatement.- No Action.

(j) Swimming Baths and Pools.- There are no Private or Public Swimming Baths or Pools within the Borough. The River Usk is used to a large extent during the Summer months for bathing purposes: new bathing pavilions and facilities have been provided.

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(k) Eradication of Bed Bugs.- Particulars of the action taken for the eradication of bed bugs.-

No action has been taken under this heading.

(l) Schools.- Sanitary Conditions, Water Supply, Health of Scholars, Prevention of Spread of Infectious Disease.- All schools are under the control of the County Education Authority. Water Supply, Drainage and Sanitary Accommodation is excellent, excepting in one instance. The County Education Committee's attention has been drawn to the antiquated sanitary accommodation at the Postern N.P. School, viz., trough closets. No schools were closed during the year on account of infectious disease.

SECTION. D.

Housing. Statistics for the year 1938.

1. Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the year.-

(1) (a) Total Number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)..... 187.

(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose..... 299.

(2) (a) Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 and 1932..... ---

(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose..... ---

(3) Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation.... 15.

(4) Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation..... 7.

2. Remedy of Defects during the Year without Service of Formal Notices.-

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers..... 69.

3. Action Under Statutory Powers during the Year.-

(a) Proceedings under Section 9, 10, and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936.

(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs..... 7.

(2) Number of dwelling houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices.-
(a) By owners..... 7.
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners..... ---

(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts.-

(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied..... 73.

(2) Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices.-
(a) By owners..... 69.
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners..... ---

NOTE.- In the case of one defaulter the Council obtained an Order from the Court requiring the execution of the necessary repairs.

(c) Proceedings under Section 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936.-

(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made..... 15.

(2) Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders..... ---

NOTE.- The Council provided the 12 families from the 15 condemned houses with alternative accommodation by building 12 non-parlour type houses. The Council have prepared another scheme for the building of a further six non-parlour type houses.

(d) Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936.

(1) Number of seperate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made..... ---

(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit..... ---

4. Housing Act, 1936 (Part IV) - Overcrowding.

(a) 1. Number of dwellings overcrowded at end of the year..... 13.
2. Number of families dwelling therein..... 13.
3. Number of persons dwelling therein..... 35.

(b) Number of cases of overcrowding reported during the year..... ---

(c) 1. Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year.... 4.
2. Number of persons concerned in such cases..... 22.

(d) Particulars of any cases in which dwelling houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding..... ---

(e) Any other particulars with respect to overcrowding conditions upon which the Medical Officer of Health may consider it desirable to report.-

The Council is endeavouring to combat the problem of overcrowding.

SECTION. E.

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

(a) Milk Supply (Milk and Dairies Order, 1926).
Inspection of Farms and Dairies.-

No of Retail Milk Purveyors in the Borough	-	-	21.
No of Wholesale Producers in the Borough	-	-	1.
No of Cowkeepers in the Borough.	-	-	12.

During the year numerous inspections were made to the Dairies and Cowsheds, and notices were served in April and October for the proper limewashing of all cowsheds. Improvements in respect of light and ventilation have been carried out and one sterilizing plant and two coolers have been installed at two dairies.

Number of Accredited Producers in the Borough.	--	3.
Number of Accredited Vendors from Rural Districts.	-	3.

Examination of Samples for bacterial content and for tubercle Bacilli.-

No of samples taken for Tubercle Bacilli - 6 (Negative Results).

No of samples taken for bacterial content - 78.

Appended is a comparison of results for 1937 and 1938.

Bacillus Coli Count.

		Summer half of year. 1938.	1937.	Winter half of year. 1938.	1937.
Absent	No.	6.	8.	15.	7.
Present in 1	No.	4.	7.	10.	8.
" " 1/10	No.	6.	5.	8.	4.
" " 1/100	No.	8.	2.	5.	6.
" " 1/1000	No.	12.	14.	4.	5.

Methylene Blue Test.

Reduced in hrs. $5\frac{1}{2}$	No.	-	-	36.	20.
" " $4\frac{1}{2}$ - $5\frac{1}{2}$.	No.	13.	9.	1.	3.
" " $3\frac{1}{2}$ - $4\frac{1}{2}$.	No.	2.	10.	1.	2.
" " 2 - $3\frac{1}{2}$.	No.	13.	2.	3.	1.
" " 1 - 2.	No.	3.	6.	1.	3.
" " 1.	No.	5.	9.	-	1.

The quality of the "Winter" milk again is of a higher standard than that of the "Summer" milk. The quick reduction time of some of the samples is due to the failure to cool the milk. The frequency of the high Coliform Count is due probably more to improper sterilisation of milk churns, than to dirty milking. However, there is a definite improvement in the quality of the milk this year.

No of samples taken from Accredited Milk Vendors - - 18.
No of samples falling below Accredited Standard. - - 5.

These unsatisfactory samples were reported to the County Council, the licencing Authority.

Inspection of Meat and Other Food, Slaughterhouses, Shops, Stall, Vehicles and places where food is prepared.-

The Public Abattoir is the property of the Borough Council, the cleansing being performed by lessee of the Tolls. Continual inspection is maintained by the Sanitary Inspectors.

Shops, Stalls and Vehicles from which meat was sold were periodically inspected.
Meat Condemned during the year.-

Because of Tuberculosis.-

Beef - 362 lbs. Pork - 452 lbs.

Other Diseases.

(1) Beef (home killed) - 961 lbs. Beef (frozen) - 156.lbs.
(2) Lamb - 273 lbs. (3) Veal - 127 lbs.
(4) Pork - 133 lbs. (5) Liver - 263 lbs.
(6) Lungs - 245 lbs.

Other food condemned.- 31 tins of fruit and meat. 14 rabbits. 9 lbs of prawns and 2 cooked Hams (33 lbs).

Carcases Inspected and Condemned.

	Cattle, Excluding Cows.	Cows.	Calves.	Sheep and Lambs.	Pigs.
Number killed (if known)	426.	21.	173.	3701.	968.
Number inspected.	426.	21.	173.	3701.	968.
All diseases except Tuberculosis.					
Whole carcases condemned.	-	-	3.	7.	1.
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned. (Excepting Organs).	2.	2.	-	5.	6.
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis.	0·47%	9·5%	1·7%	0·39%	0·7%
Tuberculosis only.					
Whole carcases condemned.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned (excepting organs)	2.	3.	-	-	33.
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis.	0·47%	14·3%	-	-	3·4%

Taking into consideration that about 450 beasts were killed this year and that the number of cows killed was approximately 20, the quality of beef is extremely high. A large percentage of lamb and pork destroyed (other than T.B. pork) was the result of emergency slaughter.

Public Health (Meat) Regulation, 1924.

The Regulations generally have been satisfactorily carried out during the year. The handling and transport of meat is observed and controlled properly, and butchers vans and hawkers carts are protected in such a manner as to prevent contamination of the meat.

Notice of emergency slaughter continues to be given where necessary.

Slaughter of Animals Act. 1933.

Proceedings were taken against a farmer for failing to notify an emergency slaughter and for not killing an animal at the Brecon Public Abattoir. A conviction was obtained.

(c) Adulteration.- Action taken under Food and Drugs (Adulteration Act, 1928)., Etc., etc., Done by the County Council.

(d) Chemical and Bacteriological Examination of Food.- Laboratories at which work is carried out and nature of the work done.-

This work is carried out by the County Council.

(e) Nutrition.- Dissemination of knowledge.- Nil. Milk is supplied to school children by the County Council free of charge, or at a reduced charge in arrangement with the Milk Marketing Board's Scheme, and also to Expectant and Nursing Mothers and to Infants.

(f) Shell-fish (molluscan).- There are no such shell-fish beds in the area.

SECTION. F.

Prevalence of, and Control over, Infectious and Other Diseases.

Cases are admitted to the Isolation Hospital; other cases where isolation at home can be satisfactorily carried out are supervised by the Medical Officer of Health and the Private Practitioners.

Vaccinations performed by Medical Officer of Health under the Public Health (Smallpox Prevention) Regulations, 1937.

(a) Primary.- Nil. (b) Re-Vaccinations.- Nil.

Cleansing and Disinfection of verminous persons and their belongings, premises, and articles.-

Two houses were clenased at the instigation of the Sanitary Inspectors.

Rats and Mice (Destruction) Act. 1919.-

During the Year the Inspectors reported that the Public Abattior, Provision Market, Sewerage Farm, and other private premises have been dealt with thoroughly and systematically.

Notifiable Diseases. (Other than Tuberculosis).

Disease.	Total cases Notified.	Cases admitted go Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Smallpox.	-	-	-
Scarlet Fever.	14.	10.	-
Diphtheria.	1.	1.	-
Enteric Fever (Including Paratyphoid).	-	-	-
Pneumonia.	-	-	1.
Puerperal Pyrexia.	-	-	-
Ophthalmia Neonatorum.	-	-	-
Whooping Cough.	-	-	1.
Erysipelas.	-	-	-
Acute Poliomyelitis.	-	-	-

Analysis of the Total Notified Ca ses.-

Age Group.	Scarlet Fover.	Diphtheria.
Under 1 year.	-	-
1 -	-	-
2 -	-	-
3 -	-	-
4 -	1.	-
5 -	10.	-
10 -	3.	1.
15 -	-	-
20 -	-	-
35 -	-	-
45 -	-	-
65 and over.	-	-
Totals.	14.	1.

(a) Cancer.- 13 deaths from this disease were recorded in the year, 6 being males and 7 females.

(b) Prevention of Blindness.- Work under this heading is undertaken by the Breconshire County Council who have the services of two part time eye specialists, one at Swansea and one at Cardiff.

(c) Tuberculosis.- Action taken under Public Health (Prevention of tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925, or under Section 62 of the Public Health Act, 1925.

No Action.

New Cases and Mortality during 1938.

Age Periods.	NEW CASES. Respiratory. M.	NEW CASES. Respiratory. F.	NEW CASES. Non-Respiratory. M.	NEW CASES. Non-Respiratory. F.	DEATHS. Respiratory. M.	DEATHS. Respiratory. F.	DEATHS. Non-Respiratory. M.	DEATHS. Non-Respiratory. F.
0 - - -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1 - - -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5. - - -	-	-	1.	-	-	-	-	-
15 - - -	-	-	-	1.	-	-	-	-
25 - - -	1.	1.	-	1.	-	-	-	-
35 - - -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
45 - - -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
55 - ---	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
65 and upwards.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals.	1.	1.	1.	2.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.

All the tuberculosis deaths were notified cases of tuberculosis.

No case has come to our notice of neglect with regard to the notification of a Tuberculosis patient.

Statement as to the causes of deaths.- Total Deaths (All causes)- 59. Whooping Cough - 1, Cancer - 13, Diabetes - 1, Cerebral Haemorrhage - 1, Heart Disease - 14, Aneurysm - 1, Other circulatory - 5, Bronchitis - 3, Pneumonia (all forms) - 1, Diarrhoea (Under 2 years) - 1, Appendicitis - 2, Other Liver Diseases - 1, Other Digestive Diseases - 1, Acute and Chronic Nephritis - 1, Congenital Debility, premature birth, etc., - 3, Senility - 1, Suicide - 2, Other Violence - 2, Other defined diseases - 5.

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

T. L. Davies,

Medical Officer of Health.

Ruperra House,
Brecon.

8th. August 1939.

C.R.
MIN. OF HEALTH
A 24 NOV 1939
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